GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1741
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2007
SHORTAGE OF DOCTORS, NURSES AND PARA-MEDICAL STAFF
Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba;Hussain Shri Anwar

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is shortage of doctors, nurses and para-medical staff in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to set up a task force to assess the shortage of medical professionals and healthcare workers;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by when the said task force is likely to be set up;

(e) whether the Government is also considering the need of PPP (Public Private Partnership) in the Health Sector;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the other steps taken by the Union Government to meet the shortage of doctors, nurses and para-medical staff in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a) & (b) There is no shortage in the aggregate number of doctors and nurses in the country. As per information furnished by Medical Council of India at present there are 6,83,682 allopathic registered doctors in the country. Apart from this, there are 271 medical colleges with 31,172 annual intake capacity and students passing out from these medical colleges every year are also adding to the strength of doctor in the country. In addition, there are more than 6 lakhs practitioners of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy in the country. However, there is an imbalance in the availability of doctors in the rural and urban areas of the country. As regard nurses, currently, there are 1597 Graduate Nursing Midwifery (GNM) Schools functioning in the country with an intake capacity of 80000 students (approximate) per year.

(c) & (d) At present there is no proposal to set up a task force to assess the shortage of medical professionals and healthcare workers.

(e) to (g) In order to expand the facilities of Medical Education and health related services, under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) the Government has decided to set up six AIIMS like institutions in under served-states and also to upgrade 13 existing Government Medical College / Institutions in ten States. Further, the Government encourages setting up of new college in the Government as well as private sector and also increase in intake capacity of medical students. The Government is also exploring the possibilities to allow utilization of district hospital as teaching hospital by the promoter of private medical colleges under public private partnership model in the underserved areas in the country and NRHM focus states.

Under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), all PHC's are envisaged to be strengthened by upgrading single doctor PHC to 2 doctors PHC by posting of AYUSH practitioners and skilled nurses at PHC level. The States are encouraged to appoint doctors, specialists and paramedics on contractual basis. Multi-skill training of doctors and in-service training of ANMs / Nurses is done. The States have been requested to strengthen their nursing cadre. Requirement of funds for establishment/strengthening of nursing and ANM schools, as incorporated in the PIP of some States under NRHM (2006-07) has been approved.

Strategic frame work has been prepared to meet shortage of nurses in future in the following manner:-

i) Establishing Auxiliary Nurse Midwifery (ANM) and General Nursing and Midwifery (GNM) schools in those districts (230) which are not having both these training programmes.
ii) Establishing post graduation Nursing (M. Sc. (Nursing)) Institutions.
iii) Developing Cadre of nurse midwifery practitioners and establishing training institutions.

In order to check the exodus to doctors and also to attract the doctors to join Central Health Services (CHS), the Government is providing better service conditions e.g. higher pay and allowances, better promotional avenues, increase in age of retirements etc. to CHS doctors. A proposal to make mandatory rural posting is under consideration of the Government.